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THE
HONOUR OF THE
GARTER.

Displaied in a Poeme gratulatorie: Entitlled
to the worthie and renowned Earle
of Northumberland.

Created Knight of that Order, and installd at
VVindsore. Anno Regni Elizabethae. 35.
Die Iunij. 26.

By George Peele, Maister of Artes
in Oxenforde.



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Gallia victa dedit flores, invicta Leones
Anglia: ius belli in florib; leone suum:
Os sic O semper ferat Elizabetha triumphos
Inculta Gallorum flore Leone suo.

Ad Mæcænatem Prologus.

P laine is my coate, and humble is my gate,
Thrice noble Earle, behold with gentle eyes
My wits poore worth : euен for your noblesse,
(Renowmed Lord, Northumberlands fayre flower)
The Muses loue, Patrone, and fauoret,
That artizans and schollers doost embrace,
And clothest *Mathesis* in rich ornaments,
That admirable *Mathematique* skill,
Familiar with the starres and Zodiack.
(To whom the heauen lyes open as her booke)
By whose directions vndetectable,
(Leauing our Schoolemens vulgar troden pathes)
And following the auncient reverend steps
Of *Trismegistus* and *Pythagoras*,
Through vncouth waies and vnaccessible,
Doost passe into the spacious pleasant fieldes
Of diuine science and Phylosophie,
From whence beholding the deformities
Of common errors and worlds vanitie,
Doost heere enioy that sacred sweet content
That baser soules not knowing, nor affect :
And so by Fates and Fortunes good aspect
Raysed ; In thy heighth and these vnhappy times,
Disfurnisht wholy of Heroycall spirites,
That learning shold with glorious hands vphold.
(For who shold learning vnderbare, but hee
That knowes thereof the precious worthiness,
And sees true Science from base vanitie)
Hast in regard, the true Philosophie,
That in pure Wisedome seates hir happines.
And you the Muses, and the Graces threc,
You I invoke from Heauen and *Helicon*.
For other Patrons haue poore Poets none,
But Muses and the Graces to implore.
Augustus long agone hath left the world :
And liberall *Sidney*, famous for the loue

He

Ad Mæcænatem Prologus.

He bare to learning and to Chiualrie;
And vertuous *Walsingham* are fled to heauen.
Why thether spee de not *Hobbin* and his pheres?
Great *Hobbinall* on whom our shepheards gaze.
And *Harrington* well letter'd and discreet,
That hath so purely naturalized
Strange words, and made them all free-denyzons.
Why thither speedes not *Rosamond*s trumpeter,
Sweet as the Nightingall. Why goest not thou
That richly cloth'st concite with well made words,
Campion, accompanied with our English Fraunce,
A peerelesse sweet Translator of our time?
Why follow not a thousand that I know,
Fellowes to these *Apolloes* fauourets:
And leaue behind our ordinary gromes,
With triuiall humors to pastime the world,
That fauours *Pan* and *Phœbus* both alike?
Why thither post not all good wits from hence,
To *Chaucer*, *Gowre*, and to the fayrest *Pbaer*
That euer ventured on great *Virgils* works?
To *Watson*, worthy many Epitaphes
For his sweete Poësie, for *Amintas* teares
And ioyes so well set downe. And after thee
Why hie they not, vnhappy in thine end,
Marley, the Muses darling for thy verse;
Fitte to write passions for the soules below,
If any wretched soules in passion speake?
Why goe not all into th' *Elysian* fieldes,
And leaue this Center, barren of repast,
Vnlesse in hope *Augusta* will restore,
The wrongs that learning beares of couetousnes
And Courts disdaine, the enemie to Arte.
Leaue foolish lad, it mendeth not with words,
Nor herbes nor tyme such remedy affordes.

Your Honors in all humble
seruice, Geo: Peele.

The Honour of the honourable order of the Garter.

About the time when *Vesper* in the West
Gan set the euening watch, and silent night
Richly attended by his twinckling traine,
Sent Sleepe and Slumber to possesse the world,
And Fantasie to hauzen idlc heads ;
Vnder the starrie Canapie of heauen,
I layd me downe laden with many cares,
(My bed-fellowes almost these twentie yeeres)
Fast by the stremme where *Tame* and *Iſis* meet,
And day by day roule to salute the sea.
For more then common seruice it performid
To Albions Queene ; when Foe-men shypt for fight
To forrage England, plowde the Ocean vp,
And slonck into the channell that deuides
The French-mens strond fro Brittaines fishie townes.
Euen at that time all in a fragrant Meade,
In sight of that fayre Castle that ore-lookes
The Forrest one way, and the ferull vale
Watred with that renoumed Riuer *Thames*,
Olde *Windsore Castle* did I take my rest :
When *Cynthia* companion of the night,
With shining brand lightning his *Eben Car*,
Whose axeltree was Iet, enchac'd with starres,
And roofe with shining Rauens feathers cealed,

B.

Peir-

The Honour of the

Peircing myne eylyds as I lay along
Awaked me through: Therwith me thought I saw,
A royall glimmering light streaming a loft;
As *Titan* mounted on the Lyons backe,
Had clothed himselfe in fierie pointed beames,
To chase the night and entertaine the morne.
Yet scarce had Chaunticleere ronge the midnight peale,
Or Phæbe halfe way gone her iourney through,
Sleeping, or waking, as alone I lay,
Mine eyes, and eares, and senses all were serued,
With euery obiect perfect in his kinde.
And lo, a wonder to my senses all,
For through the melting aire perfum'd with sweets,
I might discerne a troope of Horse-men ride,
Armed *Cape de Pe* with shield and shiuering launce;
As in a plash, or calme transparent brooke
We see the glistring fishes skoure along.
A number numberlesse, appointed well
For turnament, as if the God of warre,
Had held a Iusts in honour of his loue:
Or all the sonnes of *Saturne* and of *Ops*,
Had beene in armes against *Enceladus*.
Therewith I heard the Clarions and the Shalmes,
The Shakbutts, and a thousand instruments
Of seuerall kindes: and lowdest of them all,
A Trumpe more shrill than *Tritons* is at Sea,

The

honourable order of the Garter.

The same Renowne Precursor of the traine
Did sound, (for who rings louder than renowne.)
He mounted was vpon a flying horse,
And clothed in Phawcons feathers to the ground;
By his Escutchion iustly might you gesse,
He was the Herauld of Eternitie,
And Purseuant at armes to mighty Ione.
I looked to see an end of that I sawe,
And still me thought the traine did multiply,
And yeelding clowdes gaue way, and men at armes
Succeed as fast one at onothers heeles,
As in the Vast Mediterranean Sea,
The rowling waues doo one beget another.
Those that perfumed the ayre with myrrhe and balme,
Dauncing and singing sweetlie as they went,
Were naked Virgines deckt with Garlands greene,
And seemied the graces, for with golden chaynes
They lincked were, three louelir countenaunces.
About them Cupid (as to me it seemed)
Lay playing on his partie coloured wings;
And sometime on a Horse as white as milke
I see him arm'd and mounted in the thronge,
(As loue had right to march with men of warre.
Wearie of looking vp, I laide me downe,
Willing to rest as sleepie soules are wont,
When of a suddne such a noyse I heard,

The Honour of the

Of shot of Ordnance pealing in mine eares,
As twentie thousand Tyre had plaid at Sea:
Or *Aetna* split had belcht her bowels foorth;
Or Heauen and Earth in armes thundring amaine,
Had bent their great artillarie for warre;
And weary *Atlas* had let fall his load,
Enough to wake *Endymion* from his traunce.
Yet was the welkin cleare, nor smoke nor dust
Anoyd myne eyes: I gazed, and as I looked,
Me thought this hoste of ayrie armed men,
Girt *VVindsore Castle* rounde. Anon I saw
Vnder a Canapie of Crymson bysse,
Spangled with gold and set with siluer belse,
That sweetlie chimed, and luld me halfe a sleepe,
A goodly king in robes most richly dight.
The vpper, like a Romaine Palliment,
In deede a Chapperon, for such it was;
And looking neerer, loe vpon his legge,
An auncient badge of honour I espyed.
A Garter brightly glistring in mine eye,
A worthy ornaiment. Then I cald to minde,
What Princely *Edward*, of that name the third,
King *Edward* for his great atchiuements famed,
What he began; The order of S. George,
That at this day is honoured through the world.
The order of the Garter so ycleepd.

honourable order of the Garter.

A great effect, grown of a slender cause,
Graced by a King, and fauoured of his feeres,
Famed by his followers, worthy Kings and Queenes,
That to this day are Soueraignes of the same.

The manner how this matter grew at first.

Was thus. The King disposed on a time
To reuell after he had shaken Fraunce,
(O had he brauely helde it to the last)
And deckt his Lyons with their flowre de Lyce,
Disposed to reuell: Some say otherwise,
Found on the ground by Fortune as he went

A Ladies Garter: But the Queenes I troe
Lost in a daunce, and tooke it vp himselfe.

It was a silken Ribban weaved of blewe.

His Lords and standers by, seeing the King
Stoope for this Garter, smiled: as who would say,
Our office that had beene, or somewhat els.

King Edward vvisitle looking on them all,
With Princely hands hauing that Garter ceazd,
From harmelesse hart vwhere honour was engrauen,
Bespake in French (a could the language well)
And rise was French those dayes with Englishmen;
They went to schoole to put together Townes,
And spell in Fraunce with Feskues made of Pikes.

Honi Soit Qui mal y fense, quoth he,
Wherewith vpon aduizement, though the cause

Were

The Honour of the

Were small,his pleasure and his purpose was
T' aduance that Garter, and to institute
A noble order sacred to S. George:
And Knights to make, whom he would haue be tearmned
Knights of the Garter. This beginning had
This honourable order of our time.
Heereon I thought when I beheld the King,
But swifter then my thought by that I saw,
And words I heard, or seemed to heare at least,
I was instructed in the circumstance:
And found it was King Edward that did march
In robes, like those he ware when with his Lords,
He held S. Gorges royll Feast on earth,
His eldest sonne surnamed the *Blacke Prince*,
Though blacke of hue, that surname yet in Fraunce
He wan; For terror to the Frenchmens harts
His countenance was, his Sword an Iron scourge.
He one a cole-black Coorter mounted was,
And in his hand a battel-axe he hent:
His Beuer vp, his Corslet was of Steele,
Varnisht as black as Iett: his bases blacke,
And black fro head to foote, yea horse and hoofe
As black as night; but in a twinck me thought
A chaungd at once his habite and his Steede,
And had a Garter as his father had.

Right

honourable order of the Garter.

Right rich and costly, with embroyderie
Of Pearle and Gold. I could on it discerne,
The Poesie whereof I spake of yore ;
And well I wot since this King Edwards dayes,
Our Kings and Queenes about theyr royall Armes,
Haue in a Garter borne this Poesie.
Still as I lay, I gazd and gest at once
What was this trayne, and whether it did bend :
I found at last King Edward was the man,
Accompanyed with Kings and Conquerours,
That from the spacious aerie house of *Fame*,
Set forward royally to solemnize,
Th' installment of some newe created knights.
For loe, I saw in strange accutrements,
Like to King Edwards and the Prince of *VVales*,
Full foure and twentie Knights nor more nor lesse,
In robes with precious collors of S. George :
And Garters all they had buckled with Gold.
Fame in a Stoale of purple, set vwith eyes,
And eares, and tongues, carryed a golden Booke ;
Upon the couer this I sawe engraued :

*Pauci quos æquus amavit
Iupiter, aut ardens euexit ad æthera virtus
Dijs geniti.*

Me thought this saying could not but import,
They shoulde be noble men of golden mindes,

And

The Honour of the

And great account, fauoured of Prince and Peeres :
Whose names shoulde in that Register be writ
Consecrate to S. Georges chosen Knights.
Heerewith the golden booke did open fayre,
And eathly I might read their names that next
Went to the King. They were no common men,
For to my seeming each one had a Page,
That bare a faire Eschuchion after him,
Wheteon his armes were drawne : I haue forgot
Their seuerall coates, but vwell I vnot theyr names.
And first I savve enrold vwithin this booke,
King Edwards name, he was the Soueraigne.
Their Register was Fame, Renowne before
That sounded shrill, was officer at armes
And Vsher to the trayne ; His office badge,
Was a black rod whereof he tooke his name.
Honour went King at armes next to the Knights.
Halse armed, like Pallas shaped for armes and arts :
Rich in abilliments of peace and warre,
Auncient and graue he was, and sage to see.
Neere him went Tyme, well pleazd and well content,
As if he ioyed t'accompany this trayne ;
And in his hand a Royall standerd bare,
Wherein S. George was drawne and limnde in golde.
Vnder the Verge as tytle to the booke,
Was writ : Knights of the order of S. George,

Knights

honourable order of the Garter.

*Knights of the Garter. Edward Prince of Wales
Was first, Then Henry Duke of Lancaster,
And Nicholas Earle of Warwicke made the third.
Captaine de Bouche was next renowned for armes.
Then the braue Earles of Stafford and South-hampton,
To whose successors, for his sake that liues
And now suruiues in honour of that name,
To whom my thoughts are humble and deuote,
Gentle VVriothesley, South-hamptons starre,
I wish all fortune that in Cynthia's eye,
Cynthia the glory of the Westerne world,
With all the starres in her faire firmament,
Bright may he rise and shine immortally.
And Mortimer a gentle trustie Lord,
More loyall than that cruell Mortimer
That plotted Edwards death at Killingworth.
Edward the second, father to this King,
Whose tragicke cry euен now me thinkes I heare,
When graceless wretches murthered him by night.
Then Lisle, and Burwash, Beuchamp, and Mahun,
Gray, Courtney, and the Hollands worthy Knights,
Fitzsimon, Vale, and Sir Hugh Voortesley,
Neale, Lording, Chandos, Sir Miles Stapelton,
Walter Pagannell, Eme, and Dandley; last
Was the good Knight Sir Haunchet Dambricourte.*

C

These

The honour of the

These names I read, for they were written fayre ;
And as it seemde to me, these were the first
Created of that order by the King :
And man by man they marched in equipage.

A many moe there were than I could note,
And sooth to say, I thinke the booke was full ;
And in the traine a number infinite,
True Knights of all the orders in the world,
Christians and Heathens, that accompanied
This worthy King in his Procession.

Cæsar himselfe was there, I saw him ride
Tryumphing in his three and twentie wounds,
Because they shewed the malyce of the world.

Pompey was there the riuall of his fame,
That dyed a death as base and vyolent.

Leauie I this theame : The mightiest that haue liued
haue fallen, and headlong to : In miserie
It is some comfort to haue companie.

Hector of Troy, and Kings ere Troy was built,
Or Thrace was Thrace, were there ; Olde Dardanus
And Ilus, and Assaracus came along.

For in the house of *Fame* what famous man,
What Prince but hath his Trophie and his place ?

There *Iosua*, *Dauid*, and great *Machabee*,
Last Anker-hold and stay of Jacobs race

Did

honourable order of the Garter.

Did march : and Macedonian *Alexander*,
Victorious *Charles* the great, the flowre of *Fraunce*,
Godfrey of *Bullen*, whom the Christian Kings
Created King of great *Ierusalem*.
And *Arthur* glorie of the Westerne world,
And all his Knights were in this royll traine.
Iason was there, Knight of the golden Fleece,
Knights of the *Tosson*, and of *S. Iago*,
Knights of the *Rhodes*, Knights of the *Sepulchre*
Were there ; the ayre was pestered to my thought.
Among them all a worthy man of marke,
A Prince of famous memorie I sawe,
Henry the eight, that led a warlik band
Of English Earles, and Lordes and lustie Knightes,
That ware the Garter sacred to *S. George*.
Who was not there ? I thinke the Court of *Fame*
Was naked and vnpeopled, in this trayne
There was so many Emperors, Lords and Kings,
Knights errant and aduenturous. In the booke
That on a Desk lay open before *Fame*,
For in a sumptuous Charriot did he ride
Of Christall, set with leaues of glittering Golde,
And faire traluent stones, that over all
It did reflect. Within that glorious booke
I sawe a name reioyced me to see.

The honour of the
Fraunces of Bedford: I could read it plaine,
And glad I was that in that precious booke
That name I found: for now me thought I sayd,
Heere vertue dooth outlive th'arest of death.
For dead is *Bedford*, vertuous and renouwd
For armes, for honour, and religious loue,
And yet aliue his name in *Fames* records,
That held this Garter deere and ware it well.
Some worthy wight let blazon his deserts.
Onely a tale I thought on by the way
As I obserued his honourable name.
I heard it was his chaunce ore-tane with sleepe,
To take a nap neere to a Farmers lodge,
(Trusted a little with himselfe belike)
This aged Earle in his apparell plaine,
Wrapt in his russet Cloake lay downe to rest,
His badge of honour buckled to his legge,
Bare and vnhid. There came a pilfing swad,
And would haue prayd vpon this ornament:
And saied t'vn buckle it, thinking him a sleepe.
The noble gentleman, feeling what he meant,
Hold foolish ladde (quoth he) a better pray;
Thys Garter is not fitte for euery legge,
And I account it better then my purse.
The varlet ranne away. The Earle awaked

And

honourable order of the Garter.

And told his freends : and smyling said withall ;
A would not (had a vnderstood the french
Writ on my Garter) dared t'haue stolne the same.
Thys tale I thought vpon, told me for trueth :
The rather for it praisde the poesie,
Ryght graue and honourable that importeth much.
Ill be to him (it sayth) that euill thinkes.
O sacred loyaltie, in purest harts
Thou buildst thy bowre : thy weedes of spotlesse white ;
Like those that stooode for Romes great offices,
Makes thee renownd, glorious in innocencie.
Why sticke I heare ? The traine cast in a ring
About the Castle, making melody,
Vnder the glorious spreading wings of *Fame*,
I sawe a Virgin Queene, attyrde in white,
Leading with her a sort of goodly Knights,
With Garters and with Collers of S. George.
Elizabeth on a compartment
Of gold, in Bysse was writ, and hunge a skue
Upon her head, vnder an imperiall crowne :
She was the Soueraigne of the Knights she led.
Her face me thought I knewe : as if the same,
The same great Empresse that we here enjoy,
Had clymed the clowdes, and been in person there ;
To whom the earth, the sea, and elements

The Honour of the

Auspicious are. A many that I knew
Knighted in my remembrance, I beheld;
And all their names were in that Register,
And yet I might perceiue some so set downe,
That how so ere it hapt I cannot tell,
(The Carle *Oblivion* stolne from *Læthes lake*,
Or *Enuy* stept from out the deepe *Auerne*)
Had raced, or blemisht, or obsured at least.
What haue those Fiends to doo in *Fames faire Court*?
Yet in the house of *Fame* and Courtes of Kings,
Enuy will bite, or snarle and barke at least,
As dogs against the Moone that yelpe in vayne:
Say *Frustra* to those Curs and shake thy coate.
And all the Kings since that King *Edwards* daies,
Were with their Knights and companies in that trayne.
When all were whist, King *Edward* thus bespake:
Haile *VWindsore*, where I sometimes tooke delight
To hawke and hunt, and backe the proudest Horse;
And where in Princely pleasure I reposde
In my returne fro Fraunce: A little sigh
I heard him fetch withall: His reason why
I cannot gesse: I thinke it was for this,
That *England* had giuen ore their traffique there,
And twentie tymes haile *VWindsore*, quoth the King,
Where I haue stalled so many hardy Knights,

And

honourable order of the Garter.

And tournaments and royll Iusts performed.
Behold, in honour of mine auncient throne,
In honour of faire *England* and *S. George*,
To whom this order of the Garter first
I sacred held: in honour of my Knights.
Before this day created and installed,
But specially in honour of those ffeue.
That at this day this honour haue receiued,
Vnder *Elizabeth*, *Englands* great Soueraigne,
Northumberland, & *VVorchester*, noble Earles,
Borough, & *Sheffeilde*, Lords of liuely hope,
And honourable olde *Knowles*, famed for his sonnes,
And for his seruice gracious and renownde.
Loe from the house of *Fame*, with Princely traynes
Accompanied, and Kings and Conquerers,
And Knights of proofe, loyall and valorous,
I resalute thee heere, and gratulate
To those new Knights created by a *Qucene*,
Peerelesse for wisedome and for Maiestie,
The honour of the Garter: May they long
Weare them, as notes of true Nobilitie
And vertues ornaments. Young *Northumberland*
Mounted on *Fortunes* whele by vertues ayme,
Become thy badge as it becommeth thee:
That *Europes* eyes thy worthinesse may see.

And

The Honour of the

And *VVorcest*, what pure honour hath put on
With chast and spotlesse hands, in honour weare;
Answere the noblest of thyne auncestry
In deedes to fame and vertue consecrate.
Borough brought vp in learning and in Armes,
Patrone of Musicke and of Chiualrie,
Brandish thy sword in right, and spend thy wits
In Common welth affaires: It shall become
Thy forwardnes to follow vertues cause,
And great designes of noble consequence.
And *Sheffelde*, shape thy course no otherwise,
Then loyaltie the loade-starre of renowne
Directs: that as thine ancestors haue done,
Thyne earthly race in honour thou maist run.
To thee old man with kindnes (quoth the King)
That reapest this honour in thy waning age,
See what a Tropheyn *Queene Elizabeth*
Prepares before thy herce, long maist thou liue,
And dye in fame: That hast well neere atchiued
The Noble *Norris* honour in thy sonnes.
Thrice noble Lord, as happy for his fewe,
As was the King of *Troy* for many moe.
With that he ceased, and to the formost Earle,
(For why me thought I see them euery man,
Stalld in their places and their ornaments.)

Percy

honourable order of the Garter.

Percy (quoth he) thou and thy Lordly Peeres,
Your names are in this Register of Fame,
Written in leaues and characters of golde ;
So liue, as with a many moe you may
Suruiue, and triumph in eternitie,
Out of *Oblivions* reach, or *Envies* shot ;
And that your names immortally may shine
In these records, not earthly but diuine.
Then Shalmes and Shakebutts sounded in the ayre,
But shrilst of all, the Trumpet of Renowne,
And by and by, a loud rertaitc he runge ;
The trayne retyred as swift as starres don shooote,
Frome whence they came ; And day began to breake,
And with the noyse and Thunder in the sky,
When *Fames* great double doores fell to and shutt,
And this tryumphant trayne was vanish't quite ;
The gaudy morne out of her golden sleepe
Awaked, and little Birds vncagde, gan sing
To welcome home the Bridgrome of the Sea.

D,

Epilogus

Epilogus.

W^Herewith I rouzd, recounting what I sawe;
And then thought I : were it as once it was,
But long agoe, when learning was in price,
And Poesie with Princes gracious :
I would aduenture to set downe my dreame,
In honour of these newe aduaunced Lords
S. Georges Knights. I was encouraged
And did as I haue doone : Which humbly heere
I yeeld, as firstlings of my Schollers crop,
Consecrated purely to your noble name.
To gratulate to you this honours heighth,
As little boyes with flinging vp their cappes,
Congratulate great Kings and Conquerours.
Take it en gree (faire Lord) Procul hinc turba inuidiosa :
Stirps rudis vrtica est ; Stirps generosa rosa.

G. P.

FINIS.



